

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN ROMANO L. MAZZOLI
ON INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING ON CUBANS
June 13, 1978

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For More Information call
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I attended a June 5 briefing on the Zairian situation conducted by Director of Central Intelligence Turner for Members of the House Intelligence Committee.

Thereafter, I read carefully all materials the intelligence community provided our Committee dealing with the invasion of Shaba Province.

This material suggests to some thoughtful observers that Cubans equipped, trained and encouraged the Katangan invaders. However, I found this material -- which security considerations prevent me from detailing here -- to be largely circumstantial.

Now, published accounts suggest that Fidel Castro actively discouraged the Katangan rebels from invading Zaire. This, if true, of course, contradicts President Carter's public statements that the Cubans encouraged the Katangans to invade Shaba.

I prefer to believe President Carter. But, it is a fact that our Intelligence Committee was not told of Castro's alleged statements.

Possibly Admiral Turner himself did not know of Castro's alleged statements when he briefed our Committee. Maybe he knew but we failed to ask the "right" question.

In any event, our Committee might not have endorsed the Administration's position that Cubans were at the bottom of this invasion -- thereby endorsing the Administration's policy toward Cuba and Russia -- had this newly revealed information been available at the time of our briefing.

Our distinguished Chairman, Representative Edward Boland, has worked tirelessly and with great success -- witness the recent House adoption of the Committee's Intelligence budget proposals for FY '79 -- to establish the credibility of this Committee and the competency of its staff.

I am distressed that the Administration has elected to deal so cavalierly with this Committee and its Chairman.